

Chapter 1 : The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism. Volume 3, The Renaissance in SearchWorks cata

The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism provides a comprehensive historical account of Western literary criticism from classical antiquity to the present day. The history will comprise nine volumes and deal with literary theory and critical practice.

The several reviews of the hardcover printing of the Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Briefly, CHLCMA opens with a consideration of several foundational issues, first treating the study and science of grammar, then the artes of poetry, letter writing, and preaching. This entire section engages with several key issues for literary theory, including the nature of metaphor and varying medieval arguments for the primacy of either oral or written communication. In its last several hundred pages, the volume turns to medieval vernacular critical traditions: There is no consideration of the literary practice or theory of Eastern Europe. Conley that aims to prove the existence of a thriving native Byzantine literary criticism. It will deservedly be the standard reference for the next several decades. My only real complaints with its contents are its occasional evaluative judgments, which strike me as irrelevant and insufficiently historicized: Nor, for much the same reason, should Simon Gaunt and John Marshall decide which Occitan works evince "decline" a word used three times in one paragraph on and which represent a "vibrant poetic tradition" comprising "many innovative and individualistic figures" Nor, finally, should Winthrop Wetherbee have judged certain medieval translations to be more accurate than others, since, of course, standards of what constitute "accuracy" in translation are precisely what should be historicized in any study of medieval, let alone modern, literary theory. Several chapters in the CHLCMA struck me as more theoretical than others, for several largely comprise catalogs of the contents of treatises or commentaries without articulating the larger theoretical principles at stake. And, as Ananya Jahanara Kabir shows in her excellent contribution, few schools of literary criticism, medieval or modern, have been as sophisticated as Anglo-Saxon writing on the interactions between orality and textuality. I would therefore have preferred a chapter on the *accessus ad auctores* to one on the *artes praedicandi*. The *accessus* tradition trains readers in how to interpret, highlights what interpretative issues should matter, and may be identified as a key site for the historical construction of the "author" as a figure of hermeneutic importance. My imagined ideal version of this book would require that several existing chapters be excised, trimmed, or combined. Not to treat such works, while giving a chapter to Byzantine criticism, is to perpetuate an all-too-familiar and perhaps anachronistic picture of Medieval Europe and "the West" as either Christian or proto-Christian. A consideration of Hebrew or Yiddish literary criticism might have treated the defense of literary pleasure in the prologue to Melech Artus, a fragmentary Hebrew Arthurian narrative produced in thirteenth-century Italy, in light of contemporary Rabbinic warnings against the reading of vernacular romances. Even these suggestions do not quite describe my ideal CHLCMA, which would have had fewer "national" or linguistically focused chapters and more on theoretical themes. Certain commonalities in medieval literary theory appear frequently, albeit under different terms. I would have liked to have seen dedicated and comparative discussions of: A deep and sustained consideration of the latter point would have required a chapter devoted to scriptural exegesis. Though he then provides a quick summary of medieval scriptural exegetical theory, and although the topic receives some consideration amidst a discussion of Wycliffite controversies over Biblical translation, I nonetheless still wished for a longer treatment. Such a chapter could have studied the varying responses to the Psalms, which should surely be understood as poetry. As poetry, the Psalms raise questions of authorship, authorial intent, metaphor, the political utility of lyric, and so forth, all longstanding issues in literary theory and all considered deeply, richly, and centrally in medieval commentary traditions. Medieval scriptural exegesis promotes a hermeneutics of strategic polyvalence; it frequently analyzes the topic of authorship, given the human and presumptively divine origin of scriptural texts; it calls for training in textual editing and also for self-consciousness about the limitations and benefits of translation given that most medieval readers read the Christian Bible in Latin rather than in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. These modes of engagement with literature all intersect with points treated elsewhere in this volume. But unlike the hermeneutics proper for classical or modern secular literature, scriptural exegesis

concerns texts believed to be true, not only in a historical or moral sense though this was the case also , but also in an eternal sense, so much so that a misreading could quite literally be deadly. The uniqueness of this hermeneutic imperative makes such a chapter requisite, while its absence necessarily means that CHLCMA obscures or mischaracterizes the most peculiar features of medieval reading practices. I must emphasize that the above paragraphs describe my ideal CHLCMA, one that perhaps will emerge several decades from now, and that my criticisms have less to do with the editors than with the press itself, which called for a "Western" and secular emphasis. The present volume must be admired for what it has accomplished within these bounds. It is emphatically necessary for any library, for any historically minded student of literary criticism, and, it should go without saying, for any medievalist with an interest in literature. I know I will use it often throughout my career.

Over thirty essays examine the growth of literary criticism as an institution, the major critical developments in diverse national traditions and genres, and the era's great critical figures. The publication of this volume marks the completion of the monumental Cambridge History of Literary Criticism from antiquity to the present day.

Renaissance theatre and the theory of tragedy Vice is to be condemned, virtue praised. This was opposed to the humour of comedy. Valla may have issued his *Poetics* in 1470, but when his notes on the text appeared in the posthumous *De expetendis ac fugiendis rebus* in 1498, while naming *muthos* [plot] as the soul of poetry, he left vague whether *fabula* that is, *muthos* or Horatian style mattered more. Forty years on, in 1524, Alessandro Pazzi made a better translation. They did so, too, because Latin Seneca was available in myriad editions from 1470 on. Firmin-Didot, 1801; Champion, 1817, vol. Renaissance Society of America, 1870, pp. Literary forms the vernaculars came apace, most of the latter in the 15th and 16th centuries although few of Aeschylus. In Giovanni Giorgio Trissino used the other two as models for his *Sofonisba*, founding tragedy on a love theme, observing unities of time and action, and writing in the *versi sciolti* [blank verse] that would become normal in Italian tragic dialogue. Also about 1524, Giovanni Rucellai wrote a *Rosmunda* based on *Antigone*, printed in 1525. This rediscovery and reworking of the Greeks prepared the way for the impact of Pazzi himself a major translator into Latin and Italian of Sophocles and Euripides and Robertello. As in so many lands, classicizing tragedy was in Spain from the earliest years of the sixteenth century. So the central role of this marginal group is noteworthy although the more so as Reformers in Switzerland and the Low Countries did likewise. Melancthon lectured on Euripides. *Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft*, 1901, p. Neogeorgus did another Latin Sophocles in 1525. By the mid use of theatre was written into the statutes of some English schools. As Du Bellay was to do, Italian theorists urged tragedy as a means to renew the vernacular as Horace had in the *Ars poetica*. Swiss, German, Dutch, Spanish, and French writers readily took their plays from one language to another. All argued that tragedy was the best way to give their languages the semantic and stylistic power of Greek and Latin. The prefatory poems addressed in the 1580s by a cast of major humanist writers to Robert Garnier the greatest French humanist tragedian laud him for making French equal the languages of antiquity. Often tragedies were about language and its effect to express new understanding of the world and human relations. Guidance about vice and virtue was achieved as much by their *sententiae*, their maxims, as by the fall into misery they represented. Reiss, *Tragedy and truth* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964, pp. Cambridge University Press, 1970, vol. Laterza, 1924, vol. Senecan tragedy, like morality, persuaded by rhetorical device and trope: They thus became essential to the idea of dramatic imitation itself. For Scaliger, despite constant reference to Aristotle, was holding a familiar claim: Schenkeveld, *Dutch literature in the age of Rembrandt*: Benjamins, 1964, pp. Marzorati, 1964, p. Buck Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt: Frommann Holzboog, 1964, pp. In Lodovico Castelvetro fought these claims more or less systematically: *Catharsis* was of major importance. *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies*, 1964, pp. Setting aside fear, Sidney thought tragedy enlivened some passions for moral and political ends by calming others, as did Denores. This explains many other arguments about the ideal composition and making of tragedies. So plot is the end of tragedy, and character suited to it, not the reverse. Not these qualities but plotted reversal and recognition move the spectator. It is not, as Scaliger argued, its cause or effect. In a famous passage in *Hamlet*, the prince advised his players how they were to act: In *Compendio della poesia tragicomica* Venice: Ciotti, 1784, Battista Guarini argued alike. San Fernando Valley State College, 1964, pp. The actors were not to identify with character. Proper performance involved absorption in action, not the strutting of an agent. It, too, must not impede the action. *Hamlet* might never say just what is mirrored nor how the mirroring works, but many others would do so. Something past is just that: A writer must bring it to the present, make action a presence, characters real. This explains a devaluing of Seneca. Champion, 1817, p. Muguet, 1817, p. In its pursuit, other new sometimes old demands were made. Because purgation had an ethical goal, it was natural that *hamartia* would come to mean an ethical failure for which the protagonist bore responsibility. Many thought the chorus blocked action and its presence was much debated. Similarly, Castelvetro argued for those three unities to which we saw La Taille refer just two years later. Following Aristotle, he wrote that a plot must be whole pp. It

must treat a single action pp. It must also, Castelvetro added, occur in a single place: Cambridge University Press, , p. The work was written c. The Greeks had always countered Seneca. Yale University Press, , p. For that reason, many argued later that time and place should ideally match those of performance and stage. Although French and Italian tragedy went further in this direction than English, Dutch, or Spanish, such demands were increasingly made. Pierre Corneille may not always have held to such restrictions in practice, but he did in his three Discourses of The centrality of action as the motor of purgation was why Cintio argued that suspense made tragedies most moving. Veit, , pp. NLB, , p. Across Europe tragedies were written according to them: Spain became special in another way: The term bespoke novelty in tradition. A general appraisal is in Timothy J. Reiss, The meaning of literature Ithaca: Cornell University Press, , pp. The Dryden quotation is from his Essay of dramatic poesy, in his Selected criticism, ed. Clarendon Press, , p. Literary work related differently to state government and authority. Hunter The practice of Elizabethan drama cannot easily be brought into focus for by the statements of Renaissance literary criticism. Literary criticism in the period was, of course, tied to the humanist project of recuperating a classical literary and cultural order revered as an aspect of a classical social order that had shown its power by dominating the known world and leaving Latin as the natural medium for all serious discourse. The vernacular drama of Shakespeare and his fellows was, however, a commercial and pragmatic enterprise, dependent not on the precepts of authority but on the willingness of a heterogeneous contemporary audience to take delight in what they were shown. Oliver and Boyd, Manchester University Press, University of California Press, In such a context the supposedly vulgar interest in novelty and variety was the prime quality that dramatists had to cultivate. The principal interest of home-grown literary criticism in the England of this period was in the moral status of literature. Of all genres, performed drama was the most difficult to defend in such terms, for not only was acting itself subject to religious objections but commercial performance was thought to encourage the worst attitudes of the worst classes in the country. Boas, University drama in the Tudor age Oxford: Cambridge University Press, Oliver and Boyd, , vol. University of Chicago Press, University of Illinois Press, This was a mode that paid little regard to the antithesis between tragedy and comedy, and the early theatrical repertory treated even classical themes in these terms. These plays belong, of course, to the infancy of English drama. Along with the establishment of permanent companies and purpose-built playhouses comes an awareness that generic titles imply separate structures of meaning.

Chapter 3 : The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: The Middle Ages by Alastair J. Minnis

ian literary history and not fully consistent with the actual continuity of certain romantic and neoclassical tenets, see Robert Gri An, Wordsworth's Pope: a study in literary histori- ography, Cambridge University Press, , passim.

Chapter 4 : The Cambridge History Of Literary Criticism: Classical Criticism by George A. Kennedy

The several reviews of the hardcover printing of the Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: The Middle Ages (hereafter CHLCMA) relieve me of the task of thoroughly summarizing its twenty-six chapters: for this, I recommend the reviews by Francesco Stella and Robert W. Hanning.

Chapter 5 : The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Volume 1, Classical Criticism - Google Books

This is the most comprehensive account to date of the history of literary criticism in Britain and Europe between and Unlike previous histories, it is not just a chronological survey, but a multi-disciplinary study of how the understanding of literature in the modern era was shaped by developments in intellectual, cultural and social history.

Chapter 6 : The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Volume 3, The Renaissance - Google Books

Annotation This volume is the first to explore as part of an unbroken continuum the critical legacy both of the humanist

rediscovery of ancient learning and of its neoclassical reformulation.

Chapter 7 : The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: The Middle Ages Vol. II (, Paperback) | eBay

This volume, first published in , addresses literary criticism of the Romantic period, chiefly in Europe. The coverage of the book, focusing on themes and genres but drawing in discussion of the.

Chapter 8 : Project MUSE - The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Volume 5: Romanticism (review)

Cambridge University Press is to be congratulated on seeing this large, perhaps somewhat old-fashioned, project through to completion. It is inevitably (to return to my opening taxonomy) more a history of ideas about literature and its criticism than a history of the practice of literary criticism.